

**WORKFORCE  
RESTRUCTURING PLAN  
GRAND JUNCTION SITE**

**FY 95 thru MARCH 31, 1996**

**November 9, 1995**

**U. S. Department of Energy  
Albuquerque Operations Office**

**Grand Junction Projects Office**

**For**

**Rust Geotech, Inc.  
Grand Junction, Colorado**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

**The FY 95 thru March 31, 1996 Work Force Restructuring Plan for the Department of Energy (DOE) Grand Junction Projects Office (GJPO) site is submitted under the requirements and according to the direction in DOE Order 3309.1A, and to meet the spirit and intent of Section 3161 of the Fiscal Year 1993 National Defense Authorization Act using the guidelines promulgated by the DOE Office of Worker And Community Transition. Although DOE has informed the contractor that the site is not covered by Section 3161, every effort will be made to meet the spirit and intent of Section 3161 by offering separation benefits that are typically available to contractors at sites where Section 3161 applies. Proposals for minimizing adverse impact on affected employees and the community are included. This plan will be updated annually or more frequently if significant work force changes dictate.**

**The GJPO site in Grand Junction, Colorado, is operated for the U. S. DOE by Rust Geotech Inc. (Rust) under prime contract DE-AC04-86ID12584 and DE-AC04-94AL96907.**

## **PLAN OBJECTIVES**

**The Plan has five major objectives:**

- To mitigate the negative economic and social impact on individual employees who will be losing their jobs at the GJPO site.**
- To assure that the remaining employees constitute a work force with the skills necessary to continue the mission of the GJPO.**
- To minimize the negative economic consequences in the Grand Junction area as employees transition into other employment.**
- To solicit participation and involvement of our stakeholders, including community leaders, employees, subcontractors, and labor unions in the restructuring process.**
- To effectively manage reductions by providing good human resource planning and effective use of allowable separation benefits.**

## **SUMMARY**

The GJPO site is the only DOE facility whose primary mission is the management of large, complex environmental restoration projects. Since 1982, the staff of scientific, construction management, and support personnel have provided the expertise needed to support the DOE's National Environmental Restoration and Waste Management Plan.

The GJPO's Uranium Mill Tailings Remediation (UMTRA) program has involved managing the cleanup of more than 4,000 properties in the Grand Junction area. The UMTRA program has been the largest single program the GJPO has taken on to date and has been a source of commendation for success from the DOE. While the UMTRA program is winding down, a similar tailings cleanup program in Monticello, Utah continues for several hundred properties on the EPA Superfund National Priorities List (NPL). The Monticello program includes the Monticello Surface- and Ground-Water Remedial Action Project and the Monticello Vicinity Properties Project.

Both programs have made use of the skills of the staff of the GJPO and Rust in characterization, design, and construction management. The staff has also provided hydrologic modeling, groundwater restoration, site selection, and transportation and disposal of contaminated material.

The GJPO was appointed program manager for the DOE Albuquerque Operations Office (AL) project to develop an innovative mixed-waste treatment program. The program was started in response to a goal set by the AL to have more than 20 different mixed waste treatment technologies within the AL complex. The GJPO supports many other DOE environmental cleanup efforts. The GJPO provides program support for the cleanup of the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, performs non-intrusive geophysics work at the Savannah River site, and performs radon-transfer modeling to support remediation of the Fernald, Ohio site. The GJPO has managed construction for the initial groundwater treatment project at the Rocky Flats Plant in Denver, and has conducted geophysical investigations to help characterize contaminated areas at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. Other projects have included the Molten Salt Oxidation Project, The U. S. Army Tunnel Neutralization Team, and The Technical Measurement Center.

National environmental programs have also been part of the work performed by the GJPO and Rust. This work has included environmental characterization and remediation of commingled hazardous waste for the U. S. Air Force. The GJPO has also provided an important research and training resource for the DOE's Environmental Restoration and Waste Management Office. Rust is currently involved in the Community College Network (C<sup>2</sup>NET) in an effort to design retraining curriculum based on a core of environmental competencies.

The UMTRA Grand Junction Vicinity Properties Program, which has been the largest single program managed by the DOE GJPO, was virtually completed in June 1993 with

only a limited number of follow-on activities still remaining. The completion date and accompanying staff reductions were communicated to Rust employees and to the community. New GJPO potential program assignments were also discussed with Rust employees and the community. It was candidly emphasized that new programs may require a change in the staffing mix to increase professional technical staff and reduce field support personnel

Rust took aggressive measures to minimize overall staffing impacts required to facilitate the process through project completion. The GJPO and Rust have evaluated and determined the required job and skill mix based on projections of work scope and funding. The overriding goal has been to retain the necessary skill mix that will be responsive to the mission of the GJPO.

DOE and its GJPO determined at the beginning of 1995 that many of the GJPO missions had been successfully completed and that there were insufficient prospects for follow-on assignments to support the current staffing levels. Therefore, on February 7, 1995, Rust employees and the surrounding communities were notified, via a DOE news release, that a significant reduction in force would take place prior to the end of Fiscal Year 1995. As a result, some staffing reduction notifications occurred between March 7, 1995 and May 5, 1995, and 37 employees were provided a 60 day notice of involuntary reduction in force. Of these 37 employees, 15 separated on or before May 5, 1995. Due to significant concerns raised by stakeholders, separation of the remaining employees was delayed.

This restructuring did not require notification under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN). However, in order to minimize the impact of involuntary separation on Rust employees, a Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP) was offered. The VSIP was successful to the extent that involuntary reductions if force were not necessary. Severance and voluntary separation pay were paid at termination. Additionally, outplacement, tuition, and relocation assistance, as well as extended health care benefits were offered to eligible VSIP participants.

Total expenditures associated with this restructuring are estimated at \$1,354,670 or \$18,306 per job loss.

## **NOTIFICATION SCHEDULE**

The Fiscal Year 1993 National Defense Authorization Act includes a requirement under Section 3161 for the Secretary of Energy to develop a plan for restructuring the work force at defense nuclear facilities. Section 3161 includes specific objectives to guide the preparation of a plan to minimize the impact on workers, including 120-day notification before commencement of work force changes. The GJPO is not a nuclear defense facility and is not covered by Section 3161. However, in an effort to meet the spirit and intent of Section 3161, Rust employees and the surrounding community were notified on February 7, 1995, via the DOE news release contained in Appendix A indicating that a significant reduction in force would take place prior to the end of Fiscal Year 1995. This date was later extended to allow the reductions to be achieved by March 31, 1996. The news release stated that up to 180 persons could be laid off at the site and indicated that severance and voluntary separation pay, as well as an enhanced benefit package, were being considered for terminated employees.

When the work force restructuring announcement was made on February 7, 1995, there were 689 Rust employees. After implementation of the VSIP there were 597 regular full time employees at Rust. As of November 9, 1995, there are 611 regular full time employees. As a result of the VSIP, attrition, and good management of FTE's, the need for further involuntary reductions in force (IRIF) has been eliminated.

## **VOLUNTARY SEPARATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM (VSIP)**

In an attempt to reduce the number of employees affected by the involuntary reduction in force, a VSIP was made available to Rust employees on June 26, 1995 through August 9, 1995 with participants terminating by August 16, 1995. Employees who applied for the VSIP, whether bargaining or nonbargaining, were eligible for severance pay as provided by the applicable contract as shown on the following table, plus one additional month separation incentive pay. Employees were able to withdraw their applications any time prior to their effective date.

### Severance Schedule

Regular employees who participated in the VSIP, received pay pursuant to Rust's severance schedule as specified in Rust's contract with DOE, as outlined below:

<i>Severance Pay for Reduction in Force - Salaried</i>	
<b>Length of Service as a Salaried Employee</b>	<b>Termination Pay (percent of average monthly base salary)<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Less than 1 year</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>1 year, but less than 3 years</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>3 years, but less than 4 years</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>4 years, but less than 5 years</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>5 years, but less than 6 years</b>	<b>125%</b>
<b>6 years, but less than 7 years</b>	<b>150%</b>
<b>7 years, but less than 8 years</b>	<b>175%</b>
<b>8 years, but less than 9 years</b>	<b>200%</b>
<b>9 years, but less than 10 years</b>	<b>225%</b>
<b>10 years, but less than 11 years</b>	<b>250%</b>
<b>11 years, but less than 12 years</b>	<b>285%</b>
<b>12 years, but less than 13 years</b>	<b>320%</b>
<b>13 years, but less than 14 years</b>	<b>355%</b>
<b>14 years, but less than 15 years</b>	<b>390%</b>
<b>15 years, but less than 16 years</b>	<b>425%</b>
<b>16 years, but less than 17 years</b>	<b>460%</b>
<b>17 years, but less than 18 years</b>	<b>495%</b>
<b>18 years, but less than 19 years</b>	<b>530%</b>
<b>19 years, but less than 20 years</b>	<b>565%</b>
<b>20 years or more</b>	<b>600%</b>

### Severance Schedule - Bargaining Unit

Employees in positions in bargaining units who participated in the VSIP were provided

**pay in accordance with the severance pay schedule as provided in their respective collective bargaining agreements. The maximum pay these employees were paid, ranged from four to eight weeks pay based on years of service.**

**There were 59 employees who took advantage of the VSIP. In addition to the separation incentive pay, eligible participants were also offered outplacement, tuition, and relocation assistance as well as extended health care benefits. The 15 employees who received separation notices on March 7, 1995 and left on or before May 5, 1995 were also provided the enhancement of one month's pay in addition to their severance.**



The cost of the VSIP was:

Separation Pay for 74 Participants -	\$363,531
One Month Pay for 74 Participants -	<u>187,496</u>
Total -	<u>\$551,027</u>

As a result of the VSIP, attrition, and good management of FTE's, the need for an IRIF has been eliminated thereby fully mitigating the adverse impact on employees.

## **EXTENDED HEALTH CARE BENEFITS**

Employees eligible for this benefit are those who separated voluntarily and who are not otherwise eligible for such coverage under another program. Under certain circumstances, an employee may be able to continue coverage at the employee's expense for preexisting medical conditions excluded from coverage under another plan for which he or she becomes eligible. Employees who are eligible for medical coverage through retirement programs, spousal programs, or Medicare are not eligible for this program.

During the first year following separation, the contractor will continue to pay its portion of the former worker's medical premium, and the former employee will pay their normal share. During the second year, the former employee will pay half of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget and Reconciliation Act (COBRA) rate. Beginning the third year, coverage will be available for eighteen months at the full COBRA rate.

Estimated cost of this benefit is \$405,643, assuming 52 individuals continue participating.

## **OUTPLACEMENT ASSISTANCE**

Human Resources (HR) conducted an internal search for continued employment of affected employees. Transfers were sought for lateral, higher, and lower positions. In the case of transfer to a lower position, an employee's salary is protected, provided it does not exceed the maximum of the lower salary grade. In cases where the employee's salary exceeds that maximum, the salary will be adjusted to reflect the maximum of the lower salary grade. Employees transferring into bargaining unit positions will be paid in accordance with that particular bargaining unit position. HR will notify managers of terminating employees' skills and will also make the employees' employment data available to interested managers. HR will assist in an external job search of Corporate opportunities on the PLANS database, DOE opportunities through the JOBBS database, and HRIN.

DOE and the contractor met with the local Resource Center and the Job Training Partnership Rapid Response Representative in Grand Junction, Colorado for the purpose of obtaining services for displaced employees. The Resource Center is a federally funded

project of the State of Colorado that consolidates the full range of transition services normally found in multiple offices into a “one stop shop”. The Resource Center agreed to provide displaced employees with the full range of transition assistance which includes: educational opportunities, counseling, job search assistance, transportation costs, child care assistance, resume writing, interview training, etc.

**Outplacement Services include:** Self and career assessment, resume preparation, interview skill training, office space and telephone usage, networking contacts, and local agency contacts regarding job search assistance.

**Local Agencies/Businesses:** Each RIFed employee is provided a package containing a list of local businesses for networking purposes. Each listing includes; Company name, point of contact, phone number, address, and type of business in the local area. A list of members of a local personnel management group is also provided to RIFed employees.

**Resume Writing:** The Publications staff, which consists of professional technical writers and editors, is available to assist in resume preparation.

**External Job Search:** Human Resources (HR) is in contact with the Corporate offices and other DOE Contractors. Corporate listings of available positions are posted on the network bulletin board.

**Self and Career Assessments:** The HR department counsels the employee on this topic and offers referrals to the Job Service Center and the Resource Center for additional assistance. The information packet includes information on training and services provided by these organizations.

**Interview skill training:** The HR department initiates interview skill training and offers referrals to the Job Service Center and the Resource Center as additional sources of training. The RIF employee packet includes information on training and services provided by these organizations.

**Employee Assistance Program:** The Contractor has contracted with a professional confidential assistance provider that specializes in psychological services for employees and their families in dealing with personal problems. Legal and financial counseling are available in addition to psychological counseling. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is normally available to the employee for up to thirty days following termination. Given the circumstances, these services will be extended to ninety days following termination. The estimated cost for the continuation of the EAP is \$18,000, assuming nine visits for 20 people.

**Total estimated costs for this activity is \$18,000.**

## **EDUCATION / RETRAINING ASSISTANCE**

Separated employees may be eligible for up to \$10,000 maximum tuition assistance over a four year period based upon satisfactory course completion. This assistance will be available for external training, as well as college course work for employees wishing to retrain in another field or enhance qualifications in their current field. The assistance will be available for tuition as well as enrollment, registration fees, and the costs of books on a reimbursable basis.

Any employee affected who is in training or scheduled for training at the time of termination will be allowed to complete such training with full reimbursement from the Contract under provisions outlined in the contractor's established reduction in force policy. Tuition reimbursement will be available to completion of the Associate of Arts Environmental Restoration Technology program.

It is estimated that 20 employees would take advantage of this benefit at an estimated cost of \$200,000.

## **RELOCATION ASSISTANCE**

Relocation assistance will be available for eligible separated employees. This assistance is specifically available to eligible employees who are hired at other DOE facilities and who do not qualify for relocation assistance under the hiring contractor's policies. Relocation assistance includes actual and reasonable expenses for transportation, movement of household goods, and temporary living accommodations up to \$5,000.

It is estimated that 36 employees would take advantage of this benefit at an estimated cost of \$180,000.

## **STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION**

Solicitation and development of stakeholder input into the Work Force Restructuring Plan at the GJPO was initiated in early February 1995, with the announcement by the DOE through the public media of the plans to reduce the number of personnel at the site in response to the national DOE Contractor staff downsizing. A Draft Work Force Restructuring Plan was circulated to stakeholders and a stakeholder meeting was held on June 21, 1995, for the purpose of receiving comments on the Draft Plan. The meeting was well attended and there were numerous concerns, and questions raised by stakeholders. Many of the questions and comments were addressed during the meeting. A summary of the questions and comments received during the meeting were recorded and combined with written questions that were submitted to the GJPO. The questions have been summarized and answered and are provided as an attachment to this document. In addition, a copy of

the summary document will be provided to all employees and interested stakeholders. Furthermore, copies of this Plan and the question and answer summary document are available in the DOE Reading Room, building 810, room 154 and are also be available at the Mesa County Public Library. A brief summary of the Stakeholder meeting is at Appendix B.

Leadership from the three bargaining units at the GJPO were consulted during the development of this Plan and were involved in a stakeholder meeting held March 2. The Western Slope Metal Trades Council, the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers, and the International Guards Union were involved in the meeting. The employees represented by these groups include the skilled crafts, the warehouse, the electronics laboratory, field services personnel, security officers, and security sergeants.

Community concerns and issues have been identified by soliciting input using the following techniques:

- GJPO briefings for Grand Junction City Council, Mesa County Commissioners, Legislative offices, Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce, Mesa County Economic Development Council, Club 20 and other community opinion leaders.
- Public access to the draft restructuring plan by providing copies to the Mesa County Public Library, placing copies in the DOE Reading Room, and mailing copies to the GJPO key contacts list.
- Issuance of DOE news release and placement of display ads in the local newspapers announcing the availability of the draft plan and the dates of public information workshops to review the proposed plan and to solicit general public comments.

Communication with GJPO contractor employees and other key stakeholders has played an integral role in the development of the Final GJPO Work Force Restructuring Plan. The DOE and Rust Geotech management are committed to a strong communication and information-sharing initiative to keep the work force and community fully informed and to maximize understanding of the Plan objectives and programs. Such sharing of information has served to reduce rumors, limit misinformation, and maintain morale.

Information is being disseminated through a variety of media, including:

- The General Manager's electronic bulletin board, and Administrative bulletins;
- Prepared materials for managers and supervisors to use for face-to-face staff meetings to ensure consistent information;
- External news media interviews, both print and electronic;

- Training and meetings for supervision and all employees on such topics as "stress management" and "managing change", and services of the company's Employee Assistance Program;
- Availability of outplacement and job search capabilities including open positions within DOE, Rust International, and Rust Geotech;
- Information and discussion sessions with employee groups when the draft work force restructuring plan is completed to allow employees to voice concerns and target issues.

High priority has been placed on ensuring that information regarding the future, livelihood, and family well-being of employees is shared with them before it is shared with the public, the media, and the community.

Information regarding the details of the RIF will be carefully communicated internally in order to minimize demoralizing the work force and precipitating the departure of employees the Contractor determines it needs to retain.

## **CONCLUSION**

This Workforce Restructuring Plan includes the objectives and programs intended to meet the spirit and intent of Section 3161 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 1993 with regard to mitigating the impact of downsizing on workers and their communities during FY 95. This plan is responsive to the forecasted workforce restructuring at the GJPO during FY 95 and part of FY 96. This plan will be updated annually and supplemented as significant workforce changes dictate.

It is important to note that stakeholders played an important role in the development of this plan. To the extent practicable, changes were made to the plan in response to stakeholders comments and requests.

## **BENEFITS SUMMARY - BARGAINING & NONBARGAINING**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Voluntary</b>
<b>Separation Incentive Pay</b>	<b>1 Month Pay</b>
<b>Severance Pay</b>	<b>Per schedule or union contract</b>
<b>Medical Benefits</b>	<b>Extended Health Care Benefits</b>
<b>Educational Assistance</b>	<b>\$10,000 maximum over a 4 year period</b>
<b>Outplacement Assistance</b>	<b>Counseling, resume preparation, job listings, networking contacts, and interview assistance.</b>
<b>Relocation Assistance</b>	<b>\$5,000.00 maximum per relocating employee.</b>

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES**

<b>Separation Pay (One month pay plus severance)</b>	<b>74 participants.</b>	<b>\$ 551,027</b>
<b>Medical Benefits</b>	<b>52 participants for one year and half.</b>	<b>405,643</b>
<b>Educational Assistance</b>	<b>Assuming 20 participants.</b>	<b>200,000</b>
<b>Outplacement Assistance</b>	<b>No additional cost for outplacement. Additional cost for EAP for 9 visits for 20 people.</b>	<b>18,0000</b>
<b>Relocation Assistance</b>	<b>Assuming 36 participants.</b>	<b>180,000</b>
<b>Total Anticipated Separation Cost</b>		<b>\$1,354,670</b>
<b>Total Cost per Job Loss (74)</b>		<b>\$18,306</b>

## **Appendix A**

### **Announcement**

## **Appendix B**

### **STAKEHOLDER MEETING**

#### **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

#### **GRAND JUNCTION**

The U.S. Department of Energy/Grand Junction Stakeholders meeting was held in Grand Junction, Colorado on June 21, 1995. Mr. Jim Lampley, Manager DOE/GJPO, opened the meeting by welcoming all stakeholder participants and inviting their input. Mr. Lampley's comments addressed the restructuring activities of the force, the strategic realignment of the DOE nationwide, and the contract recompetition, all of which are occurring concurrently.

Mr. Lampley then introduced Mr. Richard Baca, facilitator, who defined how the meeting would be conducted and established the ground rules. Following Mr. Baca's comments, Mr. Ortiz, Chief, Contractor Human Resources Branch, DOE-AL was introduced.

Mr. Ortiz provided a very thorough and comprehensive overview of the restructuring initiatives to assist the DOE in becoming more efficient and competitive in our global economy. Mr. Ortiz described the Restructuring Plan which was developed to define the scope of the downsizing initiatives, the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program, and the benefits which would be provided to affected employees. In addition, Mr. Ortiz addressed the process for implementing the Restructuring Plan.

Following the presentation, Mr. Ortiz fielded questions from the participants. Questions included:

- How employees and critical skills were identified
- Benefits (educational assistance, relocation, medical and dental coverage, retirement, 401(k))
- Severance Pay issues
- Eligibility for Unemployment Compensation
- Vesting Rights
- Voluntary Separation Incentive
- Recompetition

Employees also had the opportunity to submit written questions through June 30, 1995.



**All questions were consolidated and were answered by a team comprising representatives from DOE-AL, DOE-GJPO, and Rust Geotech. Written responses were provided to all of the Rust employees and copies were sent to community members who attended the Stakeholder Meeting.**

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<sup>1</sup> Average monthly base salary computed based on previous 36 month's salary.